UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/737
10 September 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 10 SEPTEMBER 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that at 0930 hours on 20 August 1996, while the Iraqi tugboat 7 Nisan was towing the Iraqi dredger Basra from the port of Umm Qasr to Faw, close to the deep water port of Khawr Al-Amaya, an American helicopter began to hover over the Iraqi tugboat and asked the captain of the tug to talk to the helicopter on channel 60. This he was not able to do, as the tug had no radio on board, whereupon an American frigate bearing the number 37 approached the tug. When at a distance of half a mile, it lowered a rubber boat with a crew of four, including a Kuwaiti national who acted as an interpreter. They searched the tug before requesting back-up from the frigate. A further 20 men boarded the tug at about 1000 hours and directed the crew of the tug to assemble at its stern. They then searched the tug and made a copy of its papers, leaving the vessel after failing to find anything in it. The operation took 90 minutes.

I request you to intervene with the Government of the United States of America in order to bring an end to such hostile acts, which have been frequent and are in blatant contravention of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. These acts are both provocative and completely unjustified and aim only to threaten peace and security, destabilize and raise the level of tension in the region.

I reaffirm the legitimate right of the Republic of Iraq to compensation for the material losses sustained as a consequence of this provocative act, in accordance with the principle of international accountability.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed Hamid HASAN
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

96-23588 (E) 120996 120996 130996